

## Book Review

# Threatened fishes of India

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The book 'Threatened fishes of India' is the proceedings of the National seminar on Endangered Fishes of India held at Allahabad on 25th and 26th April 1992. The book provides a lot of information and also points out the lacunae in information with respect to the endangered fishes of India, both inland and marine.

The book is divided into five chapters (The word 'sections' would have been a better choice). The first chapter deals with 'Conservation criteria of present status in freshwater'. There are 18 papers in this section covering most of the major river systems of the country and Kolleru lake of Andhra Pradesh. The criterion for classifying the status, such as Endangered, Vulnerable and Rare, of different species laid down by IUCN is adopted by most of the authors. However, the difficulty in determining the status of fish is very much obvious and an element of subjectivity can be felt in most cases.

The second section deals with the Conservation status of fishes in the

upland cold waters'. Obviously the section covers the Sub-Himalayan cold waters. There are seventeen papers in this section. Mahseer appears to be the most threatened fish among the cold water species as it occupies the top position in the list of threatened species in most of the papers of this section.

The third section deals with the 'Status of fish conservation in brackishwater and marine environments.' There are only six papers in this section, much less than what one would expect. The inherent problem of deciding the status of a fish is much more aggravated in the marine context because of the indefinite boundaries. The conservation measures suggested, though not new, have to be viewed seriously in the background of explosive development of coastal aquaculture.

Chapter four contains seven papers on Genetics of threatened fishes and their conservation'. A contribution by B.C. Jenson on 'Fish Refugia and Cap-

tive Propagation' is worth mentioning. The need for evolving some down-to-earth measures for conservation of biodiversity is badly felt.

As a logical step, the 'Seminar in brief', occupying the last slot, summarises the deliberations of the seminar and gives the recommendations. Attempt is also made in this section to categorise the endangered species and to prioritise the fish species conservation. The book also has an extensive index covering species, authors and subjects.

The editors, obviously too busy in their positions, have allowed a large number of typographical errors. The excellent layout is eclipsed by the shabby binding. However, the efforts of NATCON is praiseworthy. The book will be a valuable source of information on conservation of fish in India.

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